



# Applegarth Primary School - Early Years Policy

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**Person responsible:** Alex Miller

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## **VISION**

We are a supportive, safe and aspirational school with a proud heritage and ambitious vision to build a thriving and inclusive community.

Our vision for Applegarth:

- Our learners will be confident and aspirational individuals, who have high expectations of themselves and are courageous risk-takers, ready for the next step in their lives.
- High standards will be achieved through a rich, contextually-relevant and exciting curriculum that provides memorable experiences through inspirational teaching, high-quality educational visits and input from experts.
- Pupils from all backgrounds, contexts and starting points will have achieved exemplary academic progress and personal development, where talents have been quickly identified and effectively nurtured.
- Our school community will be able to celebrate their own unique qualities whilst showing respect and care for the diverse and ever-changing world around them.
- We will be proud to say that we have fulfilled the purpose of being the model school at the heart of our town and county.

Every child is unique and joins Applegarth with varying levels of social skills and learning. Bearing this in mind, our aim is to:

- Give each child a happy and positive start to their school life in which they can establish a solid foundation for a love of learning.
- Enable each child to develop socially, physically, intellectually and emotionally.
- Encourage children to establish independence within a secure and friendly atmosphere.
- Support children in building relationships through the development of social skills such as cooperation and sharing.
- Work alongside parents to meet each child's individual needs to ensure they reach their full potential.

### **1. Legislation**

This policy is based on requirements set out in the 2021 Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) and non-Statutory Guidance, Development Matters 2020

### **2. Transition- supporting children and families through change.**

#### **Reception**

Parents of children who are offered a place in Reception are invited to an induction meeting in the Summer Term. At this event you will meet the staff, find out about the early years curriculum and how we learn at Applegarth Primary School. You will be given a 'Starting School Pack', which provides lots of useful information and guidance as to how best prepare your child for school.

The staff will visit the children at their nursery or at home prior to starting school in September. All children are offered three taster sessions in the summer term, one of these days includes lunch. More

sessions will be made available if it is deemed necessary. You will find out which class your child is in before they start school in September.

## **Year 1**

Nearing the end of reception, the children will be given transition time into their year 1 class to support their wellbeing. This provides the children with time to develop positive relationships, confidence and an opportunity to explore their environment and learn new routines.

### **3. Structure of the EYFS**

The early years classes are positioned in the KS1 part of the building. Our unit consists of two classes, Bumblebees and Honeybees. The rooms are joined through our outdoor provision so children have free access to both rooms and outside, allowing children to experience different provision and experiences. The rooms are large and bright with access to cloakroom and toilet facilities. The reception classes have a full time Advanced General Teaching Assistant and a part-time General Teaching Assistant who works alongside the early year's teachers.

### **4. Curriculum**

- Our EYFS setting follows the curriculum outlined in the 2021 Statutory Framework for Early Years and the non-statutory guidance, Development Matters 2020. There are seven areas of learning and development which shapes our learning and assessment:

#### Prime areas

- **Personal, Social and Emotional Development: Self-Regulation, Managing Self and Building Relationships**
- **Physical Development: Gross Motor Skills, Fine Motor Skills**
- **Communication and Language: Listening, Attention and Understanding, Speaking**

#### Specific areas

- **Literacy: Comprehension, Word Reading and Writing**
- **Mathematics: Number and Numerical Patterns**
- **Understanding the World: Past and Present, People, Culture and Communities, The Natural World**
- **Expressive Arts and Design: Creating with Materials , Being Imaginative and Expressive**

In planning and guiding what children learn, we must reflect on the different rates at which children are developing and adjust our practice accordingly (Development Matters, 2020). These characteristics of effective learning are:

- **Playing and exploring – children investigate and experience things and 'have a go'**
- **Active learning – children concentrate and keep on trying if they encounter difficulties, and enjoy achievements**
- **Creating and thinking critically – children have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas, and develop strategies for doing things**



#### 4.1 Planning

Reading is the heart of our curriculum. We use traditional, current and award winning literature to expose children to a rich diet of reading material. The books we read together such as 'Whatever Next' by Jill Murphy, 'The Marvellous Moon Map' by Terese Heapy and 'Tad' by Benji Davies and many more ignite children's curiosity and are the focus of our planning. Staff plan activities and experiences for children that enable them to develop their skills and learn effectively. Staff also take into account the children's interests, individual needs, stages of development of each child in their care, and use this information to plan a challenging and enjoyable experience. Where a child may have a special educational need or disability, staff consider whether specialist support is required, linking with relevant services from other agencies, where appropriate.

We provide a language rich environment and focus on the acquisition of new vocabulary. The development of children's spoken language underpins all seven areas of development. Children's interactions from an early age form the foundations for language and cognitive development. Practitioners will build children's language effectively by reading frequently, engaging them in stories, non-fiction and poems, and then providing them with extensive opportunities to use and embed new words.

#### 4.2 Teaching

We follow the Seven Key areas of effective practice (Development Matters, 2020):

- The best for every child
- High-quality care
- The curriculum: what we want children to learn
- Pedagogy: helping children to learn
- Assessment: checking what children have learnt
- Self-regulation and executive function
- Partnership with parents

Each area of learning and development is implemented through a mix of approaches such as, learning through play, by adults modelling, by observing each other, through guided learning and direct learning. Practitioners respond to each child's emerging needs and interests, guiding their development through warm, positive interaction.

As children grow older, and as their development allows, the balance gradually shifts towards more adult-led activities to help children prepare for more formal learning, ready for year 1.



### 4.3 Daily Phonics

In early years we have a rigorous and consistent approach to phonic teaching. The staff are experts in implementing phonics and the understanding of how children learn to read. We use Little Wandle Letters and Sounds as a scheme to inform our planning. Children are taught the 'pure' sounds, letter formation and strategies of segmenting and blending to support their early reading. Children are assessed regularly to ensure progress and challenge is being identified and addressed. Interventions are put in place such as, mix it up, grapheme spotter and speedy reading to ensure all children 'keep up not catch up'. In addition to this we practice 'Dough Disco' and 'Flipper Flappers', which are fun, physical activities done to music to support children's gross and fine motor development and ultimately support their writing skills.



### 4.4 Early Reading

At Applegarth we want children to love a range of books, enjoy listening to and reading stories.

All our books are phonetically decodable. All children will read with a staff member at least once a week. Half termly assessments allow opportunities to observe progress term by term and allow for timely intervention to help all pupils keep up during this crucial stage in their learning. The children will take a book home twice a week which matches their phonic knowledge. In Early Years we highly value the importance of re-reading the same books to support children in developing their vocabulary, fluency and comprehension skills. They are also given a story book pitched beyond their reading ability to share with an adult at home. The intention is to develop vocabulary, cultural capital and a love of reading/sharing stories with others. These books can be assessed independently by children from the class library which is positioned in the cloakroom.

#### 4.5 Daily Numeracy

At Applegarth our numeracy is based around the Early Years White Rose Scheme. We use the programme 'Numberblocks' as a foundation tool to introduce the concept of a number. The children investigate the number along with broadening their knowledge of shape, space and measure. Numeracy is emphasised in our provision and daily routines. We focus on number composition to numbers to 10 and then 20 in the Summer term to ensure that children have mastered all skills relating to the number. We focus on subitising, recalling number facts and making links with real life maths. We are working with White Rose and NFER to structure our maths teaching across the provision.

#### 4.6 Inclusion

- All children are valued as individuals irrespective of their ethnicity, culture, religion, home language, background, ability or gender.
- The EYFS curriculum is planned in order to meet the needs of the individual child and support them at their own pace.
- The **Inclusion Policy and SEN information report** ensures that the needs of all children are met, regardless of any protected characteristics they have.
- SEND in the EYFS setting will be monitored and managed by the school's SENCO.

#### 4.6 Forest School

At Applegarth, our ethos for Forest School is to:

- Enable opportunities for wonder and curiosity
- Provide a place where children can initiate their own learning
- Support and develop of confidence, communication and cooperation skills
- Encourage children to explore, experiment, imagine and create
- Experience and learn about nature and the environment
- Value environmental sustainability

Honeybees and Bumblebees visit our onsite wildlife area every week.



#### 5. Key Person

At Applegarth each child is assigned a key person. This will be their class teacher. Their role is to help ensure that every child's care is tailored to meet their individual needs, to help the child become familiar with our setting and develop positive relationships with both child and the parents.

## **6. Assessment**

At Applegarth, ongoing assessment is an integral part of the learning and development processes. Staff observe pupils to identify their level of achievement, interests and respond to day-to-day observations. These observations are used to shape future planning. Practitioners also take into account observations shared by parents and/or carers. We have the attitude of 'keep up not catch up' at Applegarth. Continuous, rigorous assessments allow gaps to be addressed quickly and targets set to ensure children achieve.

### **Assessment at the start of the reception year - the Reception Baseline Assessment**

The reception baseline assessment (RBA) is a short and simple check of a child's early literacy, communication, language and maths skills when they begin school and is statutory for all schools from September 2021. The assessment will form the start of a new measure of how schools are helping their pupils to progress between reception and year 6. Your child does not need to prepare. There is no pass mark or score and your child should not realise they're doing an assessment.

### **Assessment at the end of the EYFS- the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile (EYFSP)**

In the final term the EYFSP must be completed for each child. The Profile provides a well-rounded picture of a child's knowledge, understanding and abilities, their attainment against expected levels, and their readiness for Year 1. Each child's level of development must be assessed against the early learning goals (see section 4). The practitioner must indicate whether children are meeting the expected levels of development, or if they are not yet reaching expected levels. This is the EYFS Profile. We will share the results of the Profile with parents/or carers.

## **7. Working with parents**

Working together with parents is very important to us at Applegarth. We have an open-door policy and work collaboratively with parents to support their children in being happy, successful and safe at school.

Other ways we develop parent partnership include:

- Inviting all new parents to an induction meeting led by the head teacher and early years staff during the summer term before their child starts school.
- 3 taster sessions in the summer term given to the new children to spend time with their teacher before starting school and time for parents to meet the staff.
- Weekly school newsletter, termly class newsletter and curriculum overview.
- Blog on the school website.
- Seesaw platform provides connection between home and school. Families have access to their child's journal and can comment and share learning from home.

- Parent consultation meetings in the Autumn and Spring at which the parents discuss the child's progress in private with the teacher.
- We invite parents/carers into the school in the spring 2 and summer terms for 'stay and play' sessions to celebrate their child's learning and provide opportunities to observe lessons such as phonics.
- Parent Information Evenings linked to areas of the curriculum.
- Reading diaries are sent home daily where both parents and practitioners can record listening to children read and also write short messages.
- Report on their child's attainment and progress at the end of the school year
- Report on the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile (EYSFP) at the end of the school year

## **8. Safeguarding and welfare procedures**

Our safeguarding and welfare procedures are outlined in our [Child Protection Policy](#). If a pupil requires intimate care, we have robust procedures in place to protect their dignity and safety. Refer to our Intimate Care Policy for full details.

## **9. Mobile phones and cameras**

At the beginning of the school year, we ask for your permission for taking images of your child and explain how these may be used. We have procedures in place to safeguard all children and to ensure that children who are not to be photographed can be kept safe, whilst still taking part in the event. At Applegarth, the EYFS staff use school equipment for taking photos of children which will be used for educational purposes only, such as, observations for assessment. The equipment is stored and locked away in the class cupboard overnight. The staff will not use their own personal equipment. The staff store their personal belongings, including phones in a locked cupboard situated in the class. In personal emergencies staff and volunteers should be contacted via the school telephone.

Our Photography Policy outlines procedures and practice in school.

## **10. Monitoring arrangements**

This policy will be reviewed by Alex Miller every year and by Diane Parsons every three years.



Appendix 1. List of statutory policies and procedures for the EYFS

Statutory policy or procedure for the EYFS	Where can it be found?
Safeguarding policy and procedures	<a href="#">Child Protection Policy</a>
Administering medicines policy	<a href="#">Medical Policy</a>
Emergency evacuation procedure	School Security Policies and Fire Evacuation Plans displayed throughout school
Procedure for checking the identity of visitors	<a href="#">Child Protection Policy</a> and Single Central Record
Procedures for a parent failing to collect a child and for missing children	<a href="#">Attendance Policy</a>
Procedure for dealing with concerns and complaints	<a href="#">Complaints Policy</a>
Intimate Care Policy	<a href="#">Intimate Care Policy</a>
Photography policy	<a href="#">Photography Policy</a>